



Department of Biological Sciences Newsletter

“from biomolecules to the biosphere”

No. 14

April 15, 2016

Announcements

Department members, just a reminder that, as in the past few years, the Department has entered a team for the **Mother's Day Race and Walk**. So far 16 people have signed up. Well done! For the past few years, we have had great fun and helped raise money for the various Neonatal Intensive Care Units in Calgary and Southern Alberta.

The race is on Sunday 8 May (yes it is Mother's Day...a good exercise before brunch with mum or as a mum).



Warm-up starts around 0840h, and races/walk start around 0900.

The start and finish are at Chinook Mall as in the past couple of years. Easy access via LRT which is free for participants.

There is a 5km race/walk and a 10km race. Also wheelchair races.

No experience necessary and all levels of fitness are welcome as long as you can walk 5km.

I will pick up the race packages and distribute them on Friday 6 May, so you needn't worry about that.

You can get all the information and register at: <http://www.mdrunwalkride.com/calgary-registration-information.html> Deadline to register is 1 May.

To register, you will need to know the Team name (Biosci UofC) and password (DNA).

We welcome students, staff, faculty, post-docs, family members etc.

Last year, Casey Hubert's group took bragging rights as the biggest group on our team. I don't see them on the list so far...must still be recovering from last year!!

Perhaps some friendly competition (in terms of participation not speed!) among research clusters, research groups, floors in the building, etc) can be generated?! Come on students, shame your supervisor into getting off their... chair and getting some exercise!

Many thanks. Looking forward to another fun event

Robert

Important Dates

April 29 - University 50th birthday - afternoon event in EEEL

June 9 - Convocation (morning) and luncheon



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

Recent Publications



Scharf BE, **Hynes MF**, Alexandre GM (2016) Chemotaxis signaling systems in model beneficial plant-bacteria associations. *Plant Molec. Biol.* 90:549-559 doi: 10.1007/s11103-016-0432-4

Seminars



EEB 601 Seminar - Mondays 12h00 in BI 211
Apr 18 - **Kunbi Adetona** - Biological solutions for energy and greenhouse gas management in Canada



BCEM 601 Seminar - Mondays 16h00 in BI 211
Apr 18 - **Sibo Chaudhuri** - The role of LSPI motif containing protein partners of protein phosphatase 2A in mitosis



MICRO 601 Seminar - Wednesdays 12h00 in BI 211
Apr 20 - **Elena Piacenza** - Evaluations of use of Selenium Nanoparticles produced by *Bacillus mycoides* selTE01 as antimicrobial agents onto hydroxyapatite coated surfaces.

Graduate Student Affairs

Research Proposals

The M.Sc. Research Proposal for **Lisa Cahoon**, in the area of “Ecology”, was accepted by her Supervisory Committee on April 14, 2016.

The M.Sc. Research Proposal for **Vaidehi Patel** entitled “Adverse impact of wastewater treatment plant effluent on reproduction of fish”, will be held on April 15, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. in Biological Sciences room 246.

The M.Sc. Research Proposal for **Marwa Thraya** entitled “Characterization of rapid non-genomic cortisol signaling in rainbow trout hepatocytes”, will be held on April 18, 2016 at 11:00 a.m. in Biological Sciences room 389.

The M.Sc. Research Proposal for **Gul Rukhsar Zeb** entitled “Methane biofiltration in tailings ponds”, will be held on April 22, 2016 at 2:30 p.m. in Biological Sciences room 186

Ph.D. Candidacy Oral Examination - Candidacy Exams are Closed Exams.

Mohsen Ramezanzpour (Supervisor: P. Tieleman) will be holding his Candidacy Examination, in the area of “Biochemistry”, on April 15, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. in Biological Sciences room 389. (Neutral Chair: R. Edwards).

Samuel Robinson (Supervisor: R. Cartar), will be holding his Candidacy Examination, in the area of “Ecology”, on April 19, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. in Biological Sciences room 389. (Neutral Chair: J. Post).

Besian Sejdiu (Supervisor: P. Tieleman), will be holding her Candidacy Examination, in the area of “Biophysical Chemistry”, on April 26, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. in Biological Sciences room 312. (Neutral Chair: H. Vogel).

Christina Amat (Supervisor: A. Buret), will be holding her Candidacy Examination, in the area of “Host Pathogen Interactions”, on May 31, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. in Biological Sciences room 389. (Neutral Chair: G. Chua).

Stephanie Mogensen (Supervisor: J. Post), will be holding her Candidacy Examination, in the area of “Ecology”, on June 3, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. in Biological Sciences room 389. (Neutral Chair: J. Fox).

Scott Seamone (Supervisor: D. Syme), will be holding his Candidacy Examination, in the area of “Physiology”, on July 14, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. in Biological Sciences room 389. (Neutral Chair: H. Habibi).

Thesis Oral Examinations - Exams are “Open” unless otherwise noted.

Ella Bowles (Supervisor: S. Rogers) will be holding her Ph.D. Thesis Oral Examination in the area of “Evolutionary Biology”, on April 15th at 10:00 a.m. in Biological Sciences room 542. (Neutral Chair: G. Voordouw).

Lisa Oberding (Supervisor: L. Gieg), will be holding her M.Sc. Thesis Oral Examination, in the area of “Environmental Microbiology”, on April 15, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. in Biological Sciences room 389. (Neutral Chair: P. Dunfield).

Yulia Tsinko (Supervisor: E. Johnson), will be holding her M.Sc. Thesis Oral Examination, in the area of “Ecology”, on April 18, 2016 at 2:30 p.m. in Biological Sciences room 389. (Neutral Chair: P. Dunfield).

Ezgi Ogutcen (Supervisor: J. Vamosi), will be holding her Ph.D. Thesis Oral Examination, in the area of “Evolutionary Biology”, on April 22, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. in Biological Sciences room 312. (Neutral Chair: J. Theodor).

Abeer Alhawsawi (Supervisor: H. Habibi), will be holding her M.Sc. Thesis Oral Examination, in the area of “Physiology”, on April 25, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. in Biological Sciences room 246. (Neutral Chair: G. Voordouw).

Darren Henry (Supervisor: G. Chua), will be holding his Ph.D. Thesis Oral Examination, in the area of “Molecular Microbiology”, on April 27, 2016 at 11:00 a.m. in Biological Sciences room 389. (Neutral Chair: G. Voordouw).

Evan Kerek (Supervisor: E. Prenner), will be holding his M.Sc. Thesis Oral Examination, in the area of “Biophysical Chemistry”, on May 4, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. in Biological Sciences room 389. (Neutral Chair: R. Edwards).

Larry Powell (Supervisor: A. Russell), will be holding his Ph.D. Thesis Oral Examination, in the area of “Evolutionary Ecology”, on May 25, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. in Biological Sciences room 389. (Neutral Chair: J. Fox).

Jordan Roberts (Supervisor: D. Syme), will be holding his M.Sc. Thesis Oral Examination, in the area of “Physiology”, on May 25, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. in Biological Sciences room 312. (Neutral Chair: V. Zaremborg).

Please note: *Pre-defense seminars are a degree requirement for a M.Sc. and Ph.D. students in Biological Sciences. Typically the seminar will take place immediately preceding the Oral Defense Exam.*

Congratulations to.....



Dr. Yibo Wang, who successfully defended his Ph.D. Thesis, in the area of “Biophysical Chemistry”, on April 11, 2016!



Brandon Allen, who successfully defended his M.Sc. Thesis, in the area of “Evolutionary Biology”, on April 14, 2016!

Leaf

News from the BGSA

Graduate Student Retreat

The annual graduate student retreat will occur this year April 16-17 at the Kananaskis Biogeo-science institute. The cost for the retreat is only \$10 for students! This includes room and board overnight, dinner and breakfast. We will have alumni guest speakers discussing careers in industry and social activities planned for the evening. Please sign up by emailing analisa.lazarocote@ucalgary.ca

BGSA Executive 2016-2017

Platforms are now available for viewing on D2L. As one nominee conceded and no more nominees came forward for the VP-Finance position. No election will occur. The executive positions will be filled by acclamation. This new executive will be announced at the graduate student retreat.

Want to improve your grad student experience?

Have your say and tell the faculty of graduate studies what is working and can be improved by completing the grad student survey. All grad students with a valid UCalgary email address received an invitation on March 24 from the Office of the Vice Provost (Graduate Studies) with a personalized link to the survey. Reminder emails will be sent April 6 and April 21. **These messages will not be auto forwarded to your personal email account.**

- Also, by completing the survey, you could win one of three \$300 Bookstore gift certificates.
- Where the number of responses are below 10, program-specific info will not be returned in the survey results to protect anonymity
- For more information on the survey, go to: grad.ucalgary.ca/cgpss
- Survey closes April 30th



biogsa@ucalgary.ca



BGSA – University of Calgary



@biogsa

Should you submit a paper to that conference?



JORGE CHAM © 2016

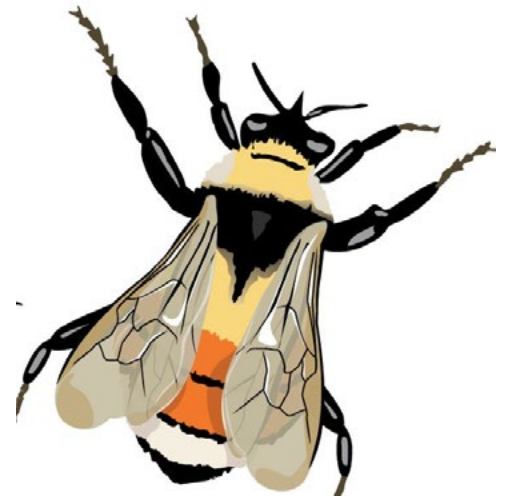
WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM

FIELD AND LAB ASSISTANTS

WANTED

Would you like to spend your summer in the field and the lab?

Interested in bees? Landscape ecology? Entomology? Sampling in or near agricultural fields? Making occasional sampling expeditions to alpine meadows?



The ECOLOGICS LAB has paid positions for up to THREE spring/summer research assistants.

Two positions will run from May to the end of August, and a third from late June to late August. Start date, end date, working hours and time off can be somewhat flexible. Most field work will involve day trips from Calgary.

Qualifications:

- Willingness to work alone or in groups in agricultural locations
- Willingness to work full days out-of-doors in remote places and in adverse weather
- Enthusiasm for identifying insects and plants
- Advanced class 5 driver's license is an asset (not GDL)
- Undergraduate courses in ecology or entomology also an asset

Please send a resume to Paul Galpern (pgalpern@ucalgary.ca) and underline your academic preparation and experience relevant to this position in the accompanying email.

For more information about our lab visit: ecologics.ucalgary.ca.



EARTH DAY CELEBRATION

APRIL 23, 2016

AT THE CALGARY TOWER

RACE FOR WILDERNESS
TOWERRUNNING WORLD ASSOCIATION
8AM. TIMED EVENT. CASH PRIZES.

FUN CLIMB
9AM-NOON. TEAM SPIRIT. PRIZES.

ENDURANCE CLIMB
9AM . NO ELEVATOR. MORE PRIZES.



ALBERTA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION
albertawilderness.ca

REGISTER
CLIMBFORWILDERNESS.CA
TODAY

geekStarter Program Call for Mentors



geekStarter is a program helping the next generation of scientists achieve breakthroughs in research and innovation. The program is open to teams from Alberta and our current teams are from Calgary, Canmore, High-River, Consort, and Lethbridge. Student teams apply to the program to receive both funding and access to geekStarter events. Teams get exclusive access to experts in various fields, a chance to participate in cutting-edge research, hands-on experience in entrepreneurial and presentation skills, and opportunities to hone and improve their projects in advance of local, regional, or international competitions. This gives geekStarter students a keen edge on their competition and their peers while broadening their skill base. A major drive for the teams is participation in the international Genetically Engineered Machines competition (iGEM): http://igem.org/Main_Page

As we expect the team roster to expand, we are placing a call for enthusiastic senior undergraduate/graduate/post-doctoral mentors who wish to provide ongoing assistance to our high-school teams throughout the geekStarter season.

The geekStarter program is looking for mentors starting in November, 2016. We're looking for people with knowledge and hands-on experience in molecular biology and bio-engineering to assist our high-school teams with their synthetic biology research projects. Mentors have a natural human desire to share knowledge and experience. As a geekStarter mentor you share in the success of your students, you have opportunities to attract and recruit top talent, and you stay sharp and focused on the breakthroughs of your field. You can expand your professional network through geekStarter and other events.

Typically, our high-school teams need help with the following:

- Purchasing lab equipment and reagents
- Setting-up lab at their schools
- Learning wetlab protocols and techniques
- Selecting a project
- Planning and building genetic circuits
- Data analysis and troubleshooting
- Presenting results (oral presentation, poster, wiki)

What to expect as a mentor:

- Mentors communicate regularly with their assigned team and provide ongoing assistance for about **1 hr/week on average** throughout the year-long geekStarter season (November, 2016 up to October, 2017 if the team goes to iGEM)
- Mentors help in organizing and delivery of workshops and events. Typically, there are 4 workshops or events per season; mentor time commitment is **10 hrs/workshop on average**. Some workshops require travelling.

If you are interested in becoming in becoming a mentor or learning more about the position, please contact mpop@mindfuel.ca.

Our webpage: <http://edacity.ca/programs/geekstarter/>